

Security Quickie 4-24-03: The State Neighborhood

While reviewing information security 'best-practices', I got to thinking about really influential people in the security world. Bruce Schneier, Richard Clark, Gene Spafford, and a few others came to mind. They were all people who've developed security tools, pushed security issues in politics, or are well-known security authors. But then it occurred to me that there's another man, recently passed away, that also shared valuable lessons that are inherent in cyber-security.

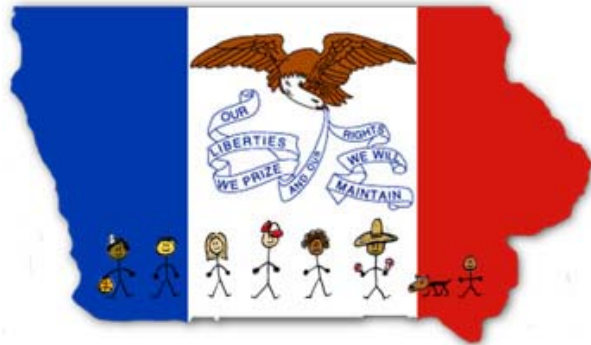
Fred Rogers.



Yes, Fred Rogers, a.k.a. Mr. Rogers - that cardigan-wearing, gentle-voiced man who welcomed children into his make-believe world and helped them learn to value themselves, value learning, and to be good neighbors to each other.

You see, in the world of information security, everybody matters. Period. From the directors who create policy, to the techies who create security tools, to the system administrators who build and maintain systems, to the end users and everyday citizens who use and depend upon information systems. Every person, and their actions, is important in the infosec world, not only to themselves, but to each other as well.

As we learn and grow with the I.T. world, we learn how to protect our information systems and ourselves by using good security practices, like using strong passwords, using current anti-virus, locking workstations, and patching operating systems. By following these practices, we also end up protecting everybody else as well, because we really are in this I.T. neighborhood together. No matter if we identify ourselves as ITD, DRF, IDOP, DGS, DOT, DNR, DPS, or any other departmental personnel, we are all State of Iowa employees and contractors. All our systems do connect, whether directly or indirectly, and a serious cyber event in one system can greatly affect the stability and security of other systems. In that way, we really do work in a "State Neighborhood", and it benefits us all when we act as good neighbors to each other.



When you protect your system and yourself, you are really protecting your neighbor as well, which is an important lesson to remember in our information technology world. Thanks Mr. Rogers